Report on March Collaboration Discussion

Five council members joined the Chief Academic Officers at their March 25 meeting to discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration among postsecondary institutions. Faculty members representing three collaborative programs outlined the strengths and weaknesses of the different models being used. The following key issues emerged from the discussion:

- Priority setting. Given the resources and effort required to create collaborative programs, the council should identify areas where collaboration will most contribute to state needs.

- Start-up costs. Creating collaborative programs often requires significant start-up costs to reap long-term gains. The KYVU currently maintains a revolving loan fund to support on-line collaboration. A loan fund to support other types of collaboration may be helpful.

- Technology barriers. Establishing a common technology platform would simplify on-line collaboration.

- Tuition barriers. Tuition policies for collaborative programs should, where possible, reflect the cost of collaboration and allow for common tuition rates across institutions for multi-institutional programs.

- Common library resources. The KYVL and institutional libraries should work together to ensure that students in collaborative programs have equal access to necessary library resources.

- Intellectual property issues. Model policies are needed for defining ownership of courses developed in collaborative programs.

- Transfer policies. Current transfer policies often limit the number of credit hours students can earn from multiple institutions.

- Role of on-line delivery systems. The discussion provided examples of effective collaborations that were totally on-line, partially on-line, or used no on-line delivery. Each collaborative program should utilize, to the fullest extent possible, the resources available for on-line delivery.
- Multiple forms of collaboration. Academic program collaboration is only one type of collaboration needed. The council supports other forms of collaboration that may provide even greater benefits. For example the KYVL Endeavor project contracts for library resources for 15 institutions saving millions of dollars for databases used across the state. Collaborative programs in adult education, P-16, and workforce development also are contributing significantly to postsecondary reform.

The council staff will work with the institutions and the council to identify policy changes, programs, and faculty development efforts needed to address these issues and promote effective postsecondary collaboration.

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